

**W**hether you're shopping in Oberlin or Olathe, Topeka or Tonganoxie, your local grocery store isn't just a convenient place to buy food. It's one of the best places for you to send a message to manufacturers about the importance of recycling.

### HOW CAN I MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

When you're in the produce section, don't buy the tomatoes in the cellophane wrapped container. Buy the individual tomatoes instead. When you're in the detergent aisle, select a cleanser in a refillable bottle. And when you get to the check-out stand, have your reusable cloth sack ready for the bagger.



### DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

You bet. The actions you take every day to reduce, reuse and recycle make all the difference. And these are actions everyone can take at home, at work, even at the grocery store.



### SHOP SMART

Don't let that recycled symbol on a product fool you. A plastic container featuring a code number inside the symbol is just identifying the type of plastic resin the container is made from. It doesn't mean the product is made from recycled material or that it can be easily recycled in your community. Check with your local recycling program to see what plastics they accept.

Look for goods that indicate the product or package is made in part from recycled materials.

### WHAT ELSE SHOULD I LOOK FOR?

There are two kinds of recycled content: post-consumer and pre-consumer. Post-consumer means the material was used by someone like you and recycled. Pre-consumer means the manufacturer reused material that would otherwise be wasted during the production process.

The higher the percentage of post consumer waste a product contains, the better.



For more information on our environment, contact:

Kansas Department of  
Health and Environment,  
Bureau of Waste Management  
785-296-1600

KDSI website  
[www.kansasdontspoilit.com](http://www.kansasdontspoilit.com)

KDSI hotline 800-282-9790

Kansas Business and Industry Recycling  
Program, Inc. (BIRP)  
785-273-6808

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Solid Waste Hotline  
800-424-9346

(For general environmental  
information, press 1)  
TDD 800-553-7672

# BUY RECYCLED

**KANSAS  
DON'T SPOIL IT!**

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## GET ON THE RECYCLE CYCLE

Right now, less than 15% of the Municipal Solid Waste generated in Kansas is recycled. With your help, we can do much better.

### HOW IMPORTANT IS IT?

As you take the time to bag or bundle your newspapers for recycling, you might wonder, "Is it worth the effort?" The following figures from the Environmental Excellence Campaign should answer your concerns: "Producing a ton of recycled paper uses 64% less energy, 58% less water; results in 74% less air pollution, 35% less water pollution; saves 17 pulp trees and creates five times more jobs than producing a ton of paper from trees."

### HOW ABOUT THE CANS?

We can make 20 cans out of recycled aluminum with the same energy it takes to make one can out of new material.

It also reduces disposal costs and saves landfill space.



## THEY'RE RIGHT ABOUT SMALL PACKAGES

The old saying is true – good things do come in small packages. Unfortunately, many of the products we buy aren't packaged with environmental care. Unnecessary layers of materials are used. It's a big problem; packaging makes up one-third of the trash we generate.



## BUYING RECYCLED PRODUCTS AT WORK

Businesses throughout Kansas can be a special part of the recycling effort by developing purchasing policies that encourage the selection of products made from recycled materials.

### BUT WHAT ABOUT QUALITY?

When recycling efforts began, there were questions about the quality of the products made from recycled materials.

Given the test of time, those products have proven to be just as good as comparable items made from virgin raw materials.



## MONEY TALK\$

Every time you buy a product made from recycled materials, you are sending a message to the product's manufacturer – you support recycling.

You can send an even more direct message by thanking the company – in writing – for their environmental action.

On the flip side, you can also write to manufacturers who aren't recycling and are using excess packaging. Encourage them to get on the recycle cycle.

### WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

- Buy in bulk. There's less packaging and you save money.
- Use rags instead of paper towels.
- Drink from mugs instead of paper cups. Think durable rather than disposable.
- Wash plastic utensils and reuse them.
- Buy rechargeable batteries.



## YOU COULD BE SITTING ON A MILK JUG

Did you know park benches could be produced from recycled plastic milk jugs? That's not all. Insulation can be made from old newspapers; bald tires can become a patio surface or a welcome mat; and the polyester resin from a plastic pop bottle can be turned into everything from carpet to clothes.

## DON'T LOSE YOUR LUNCH MONEY

That's not just a warning for school kids anymore. It's environmental advice for all of us. For example: When you pack your lunch, do you put the sandwich in a plastic bag, put the plastic bag in a paper bag, then throw both bags away after you eat? If so, we have a suggestion: buy a reusable lunch bag and sandwich container.



## IT'S IN THE BAG

A small purchase gives you a perfect chance to make a difference.

Just say, "I don't need a bag."